

Winnipeg Beach residents discuss new motel



Juliet Kadzviti/The Interlake Spectator
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The Town of Winnipeg Beach hosted a public hearing at its regular council meeting Feb. 22, to discuss a conditional use variance that would permit the construction of a new building containing commercial and vacation unit rentals in the commercial central zone of town.

Property developer Carla Devlin, of Carrington Property Development, made the application in order to potentially build a 10-room, three-story motel with commercial space on the first floor.

In a letter to council, Devlin said her intention is to bring more people to the vacation town.

"My intent is to improve your area with a well-designed, well-built building. The lot is in the heart of the town, surrounded by commercial and rental buildings," she said.

"I strongly feel this type of development is needed in your town and will benefit surrounding businesses."

At the hearing, Peter Czorny, owner of the Hamilton House Motel, which is located opposite the empty lot, presented a detailed report to council, specifying why he thought the development should not be considered.

In it, he specified he felt a new motel would have a negative impact on the surrounding properties.

"It's not that I'm afraid of competition, it's just that we do not need that here. This type of thing, in my opinion, is just a waste land," Czorny said.

Devlin was also given an opportunity to speak, where she told council she had a good track record with other communities where she had other developments and was intending to continue this rapport in Winnipeg Beach.

Coun. Daryl Carry told council the idea of new motel was good because it was something needed in the community.

"We don't have new accommodations, and we are badly in need of new developments," he said.

Czorny, who has owned his business for over 12 years, rebutted stating he knew the climate for business in the area and it would only diminish "a very small pie."

Mayor Tony Pimentel told attendees the application was just to allow for the space to be used for commercial-use and did not mean the motel would necessarily be approved for construction.

"We would need the building proposal to see if it would fit within our bylaws," he said.

Coun. Pat Green added the bylaw does not stop other businesses, that could also negatively affect property values, from being built on the lot.

Directly after the hearing council elected to vote on the application, unanimously passing it.

Pimentel told attendees a new motel was amongst the most requested things for the community.

"We are told we need that the most by residents. I believe it'll also increase further development in the community," he said.

After the meeting, Czorny told The Interlake Spectator Feb. 27, in his view, council had not taken anything he had said into account when coming out with their final decision.

"I thought they would adjourn and take a serious look at my presentation to assess the merits of that. There were a lot of elements to it" he said.

"Instead, they were openly advocating for the developer."